



# Historical Highlights

v. 2, n. 1



Mar. 2013

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## President's Message

by *Debra Bisel*, SCHS President

### Members—

**The year 2012 was productive.** We had so many activities that it was not possible to attend them all! Beyond busywork, however, those activities have played a role in fulfilling our purpose: **to preserve, collect and interpret the history of Shawnee County, Kansas.** This purpose shall include, but is not limited to:

- Promoting public participation in local historical preservation and heritage commemoration
- Recognizing exceptional historic preservation
- Publishing materials on Shawnee County, KS, history
- Preserving and interpreting selected historic landmarks
- Providing community education in areas of local history and culture
- Collaborating with relevant heritage organizations

Our committees have done an excellent job in each of these areas but our mission is an on-going one. There are new residents of Shawnee County every day and legions who remain unaware of their ability to participate in the society. *Outreach* and *collaboration* should be our watch-words for 2013.

Now that the SCHS has a home, it is time to truly assume a role of leadership in the community in partnering with other entities and promoting awareness and education in all areas and eras of our common history. The proximity of the Brown v. Board site has lent itself to a strong relationship that serves programming and education. There are other opportunities as well. The Civil War Round Table of Eastern Kansas has begun holding its meetings in the Cox Communication Heritage Education Center and many of its members are or will become members of the Society. Their meetings are free and open to the public, and feature local and national experts on myriad issues of the Civil War. It is a perfect partnership for the SCHS. The Combat Air Museum and Great Overland Station are both increasing educational programming and present opportunities for further collaboration. Topeka Cemetery is increasing



—continued on p. 2

## President's Message, cont.

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awareness of its role in the community as an historic site as well. As a member of the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area, we are part of a larger community telling the ever evolving story of America's quest for freedom. There are many more partnerships and collaborations to be identified.

All of these activities take time and money. We held a Shawnee County Attic Sale in 2012 that will become a very successful annual fundraiser. We have secured warehouse space from a local businessman that will enable us to accept donations throughout the year and to host an event this fall that will be exciting for the entire community!

We are most appreciative of the support of the Antique Dealers in Shawnee County and hope to further develop that relationship in the coming years. It, too, is a natural fit for the SCHS. So many of us came to love history through objects or architecture.

As Education Chair Doug Wright and our part-time employee Melinda Abitz have done an outstanding job of increasing visitation, awareness, education, we have a greater need for volunteers to lend a hand. It is a good problem and a good way to become involved.

With out-reach and education in mind and through the

volunteer efforts of Robin Shrimplin, we are instituting a "Student Historian" program that will introduce students to significant sites in Shawnee County. We are charging \$10 per student to cover the administrative costs and encourage you to take advantage of a unique opportunity for students to get to know their communities.

Our transition to expanded newsletters rather than an annual bulletin has been very well-received. We appreciate Carol Yoho's time and expertise, and Doug Wallace and Jeanne Mithen for always providing quality content.

I, personally, am so thankful for this dedicated and capable Board of Trustees. I am privileged to work with them and for you. Now, for your assignment: spread the gospel of history. Buy a gift membership, buy a bulletin and pass it along. If you belong to a group that needs a program, let us know. I will be happy to fit it into my schedule, and if not me, then we have other members who would be equally willing and effective. Look for every opportunity to share the SCHS. Encourage your friends to join. Volunteer.

We, the members of the SCHS, do good and important work. Let us look to our heritage for encouragement and to our future with renewed energy.

## Visitors Tally

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### 2012:

- Total Visitors to 1116 & 1118 SE Madison – 1,317
- 2012 School / Student Organization Tours: (8)
- History Camp for Kids (48 campers)
- Ann Hawkins, History Class (two classes per week- Sept. – May)
- Aug. 5, 2012 – Ice Cream Social – (100)
- Reader's Theater
- Preservation Series
- Enduring Struggle for Freedom public program series during November.
- History Day (topic consultations) with students
- Hosted Topeka Public Schools Multicultural Meeting

### 2013 In-the-works:

- **School Tours** (4) are currently scheduled
- **Kansas Day Exhibit** occurred in **January 2013**
- **History Camp** for kids will partner with **Central Park Community Center** for **June/July 2013**
- **Project Archaeology** – teacher workshop is scheduled for **July 2013**

**KSHS had a table on display** at the annual "Ancestor Fair," held at the Kansas History Center on Saturday, October 20, 2012. Board member Martie Rison and her son, Gavin, helped host the table.

— Photos by **Charity Rouse**



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**Abraham Lincoln Speaks — Tuesday, November 27, 2012.** Lincoln reenactor was **Troy Strahan** of Gardner, KS. **Civil War Roundtable of Eastern Kansas**, meets monthly on **4th Tuesdays** at Cox Communication Heritage Education Center, 1118 SE Madison, Topeka. Meetings are free and open to the public, but attendees are encouraged to join CWR.

— Photos by **Gary Bisel**

# School Tours:

by *Melinda Abitz*, Education Program Developer

The Ritchie House Education branch of the Shawnee County Historical Society has four themed field trip packages for visiting classrooms. Three of the field trips are 90 minutes in length while our signature field trip, “Rediscover Freedom’s Pathway,” is an all-day tour with classrooms visiting The Kansas Capitol, The Historic Ritchie House, and Brown vs. Board of Education site. Early settlement, The Underground Railroad, Exodusters and the “Freedom’s Pathway” theme are presented.

All tours rotate between the Smart Room (the room with the Smart Board), the downstairs classroom, and an interpretive tour of the Ritchie House, all focusing on the theme of the day.

Depending on the age of the groups, the elementary tours might get some hands-on activity in the classroom while the middle/high school will have a discussion in the classroom of the theme. All material presented is tailor-made to build upon the school classroom area of study in Kansas History.

The field trip experiences correlate with the Kansas History and Kansas Reading and Language Arts Standards.

We have five volunteers that assist in conducting field trips by adding their individual expertise to the experience. **Bill Wagon, Doug Wright, George Bernheimer, Robin Shrimplin**, and staff member, **Melinda Abitz** find each group of young people to be enjoyable and eager to learn more about their Kansas heritage. As always, we are always looking for more people to join our growing number of volunteers. We like to spread the fun around!

1. January 23 - **Lowman Hill Elementary School** – 8 students from the ELL class visited us and learned about the Underground Railroad. Melinda gave a lesson called “Right Under Their Noses” on the Smart Board and then George gave them a tour of the Ritchie House.

2. January 28 – **Highland Park Central Elementary School** – 60 fourth graders came to further their studies on early Kansas. Melinda gave



the Smart Board lesson, “Right Under Their Noses.” Students learned about the Ritchies with a tour given by George of the Ritchie House. Bill continued with a lesson in the classroom about early settlement and a discussion on “Freedom”.



3. February 15 - **Heritage Christian School** – 14 third and fourth graders came to visit the Ritchie House for the “Right Under Their Noses” experience. Melinda gave the lesson on the Smart Board which emphasized the dangers of the Underground Railroad. George gave

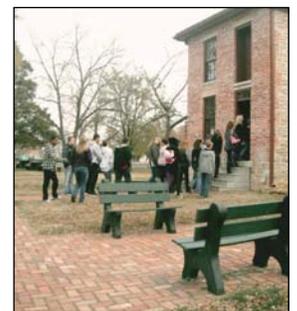


the students a tour of the Ritchie House and answered many questions. The field trip ended with the students sitting on the floor of the Ritchie front room while Melinda read “Almost to Freedom” by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson. This is what the National Park Service explains as “The Power of Place” or experiencing history first hand in a historic place.

— Photos by **Melinda Abitz**



NOTE: In November, 2012, **Lansing High School** toured the Ritchie properties. For two days 260 students toured historic sites in our area.



## Upcoming Events:

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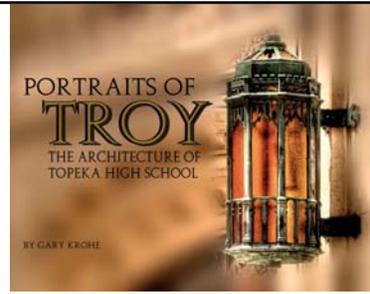
### “The Portraits of Troy”

Soon to be released! The story of Topeka High in photographs! *The Portraits of Troy* is by Topeka photographer Gary Krohe.

The official book release party will be during First Friday Art Walk on **April 5, 2013**, in the **Topeka High School Cafeteria**, from **5 p.m. until 8 p.m.**

- **272 pages, an intimate photo essay of a Kansas landmark**
- **Over 340 beautiful color images**
- **58 pairs of then and now photos**
- **Over 100 historic photos from 1932 and before**

A portion of the proceeds will go to the THS Historical Society. Visit [www.portraitsoftroy.com](http://www.portraitsoftroy.com) for pre-release discount information. You can purchase books now and arrange for pick-up at the Topeka High School event or arrange for delivery.



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### “Forging Freedom’s Frontier”

Please “save the date”: **Saturday, April 6** will be “Forging Freedom’s Frontier,” wherein the Society will partner with the **National Park Service** to stage an heritage walk between the Ritchie House to the Brown v. Board museum, encountering at several stages historical characters reenacting their contribution to the enduring struggle for freedom between the 1850s at the Ritchie House to the 1950s at the Brown v Board Museum. That 100 years contained local episodes and personalities which demonstrate how understandings of freedom changed over time and how each change entailed tensions and conflicts that mapped our community’s development and that of the nation’s. Details will be forthcoming.

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### “John Doy’s Escape”

The Shawnee County Historical Society will host a performance by the **Baker University Speech Choir**, “**John Doy’s Escape**,” as part of the Shared Stories of the Civil War script series. This will take place at the **Cox Communications Heritage Education Center**, 1118 SE Madison, Topeka, on **Thursday, March 14, 2013**, at **7:00 p.m.**

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### Summer Opportunity for Teachers

**June and July - 2 days per week** - volunteer as many days as you wish and get **FREE** resources for your classrooms. Build your repertoire of meaningful Kansas History Lessons and Activities, projects, and activities. Learn where to find quick resources and much more! Please call Shawnee County Historical Society at 785-234-6097.

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### Tidbit:

By **Jeanne Mithen**, in response to an email inquiry about the *Topeka Flood of 1902*—

The bulletin you referred to is a 152 page book, *Flood! Tales of a Rampaging Kaw*, SCHS bulletin 78, Dec. 2001. It does not mention the 1902 flood in its chapters on early Topeka floods. However, *The Topeka State Journal*, beginning July 9, 1902 to about July 15, 1902, when the river level began falling significantly, has front page coverage of the rising waters, which by July 14 cut Topeka off by rail from Kansas City. The newspapers are available on microfilm in the TSCPL Topeka Room, or through the Kansas State Historical Society Research Center on interlibrary loan.

## SCHS Biography: John Armstrong Founder of Topeka's Underground Railroad

by Douglass Wallace, SCHS Board Member

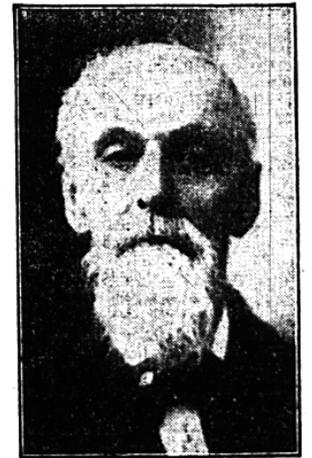
**C**ircumstances of the times kept John Armstrong's name from the list of Topeka's founding fathers. However, his leading role with the Underground Railroad compares with the greatest contributions by any of the Kansas and Topeka founders. Following are excerpts from accounts published in his lifetime and shortly afterward. The first is a 1910 biographical sketch in *The Blue Book of Topeka*:

"John Armstrong was born at Oxford, Canada,... June 8, 1824. His father moved to Alleghany county, N.Y., about 1830.... He was a strong anti-slavery man—a Garrisonian [William Lloyd Garrison was a prominent abolitionist.] When Kansas was made a territory, he shaped his affairs to make it his home. He arrived at Kansas City in company with Copeland Gordon on the 18th of November, 1854.... On the 20th he arrived at Lawrence. There he found Dr. Charles Robinson getting ready to take a party of new arrivals...up the Kansas river on an exploring expedition. He desired to go with the party, and applied to Robinson for passage, and secured a berth. Six of the party were conveyed in Robinson's spring wagon and three went on horseback... The party [including Armstrong] left Lawrence on the morning of November 22, 1854...On the morning of the 23rd the party reached the fine rolling site where Topeka was founded later. Armstrong has described that day.... It was an Indian summer day, smoky, clear, no wind. Peace was over and on the prairies. The high prairies were softened by the ethereal [sic] haze to a resemblance of the ocean. That day Kansas threw her witching spell over the party, and thence forward no other land ever appealed to them as did this.... The site of Topeka was examined, and Holliday decided that it was just what he wanted... On the down trip it was definitely decided by Holliday and Armstrong that they would attempt to build a town where Topeka now is. Holliday designed this town to be the Capital of the new state, discussing that point freely with the members of the party. Robinson discouraged this ambition in Holliday, saying that Lawrence would be the Capital. Armstrong was of the opinion that Lawrence would not be the Capital, and believed with Holliday that the new town would be. Armstrong had shipped some nursery stock, mostly apple trees, from New York, and upon

his return to Lawrence went at once to Kansas City to bring it up to the site of the new town. Colonel Holliday set about organizing a town company. Armstrong was to be a member, and expected to arrive with his young trees in time for the meeting to organize the company. But his shipment had not arrived at Kansas City, and he waited there for the next boat. This prevented his becoming a member of the town company...On his way to Kansas City, Armstrong met Dan Horn [Daniel Horne], Len Horn, and F.W. Giles...and directed them to the site of the new town..."

*Armstrong was among the first to meet future president of the Topeka Constitutional Convention and United States Senator, James H. Lane. The Mail & Breeze in 1896 reports Armstrong's remembrance:*

"The morning I left St. Louis the clerk of the boat came to me and said: 'Colonel Lane from Indiana and Thomas Shoemaker want to see you and have a talk about Kansas.' I went down to the ladies cabin and was introduced to Colonel Lane and to Mr. Shoemaker who had been appointed land receiver of the Kickapoo district. I had a pleasant talk with them, and from that time until arrived in Kansas City we had frequent talks about Kansas. I became satisfied in my own mind that Lane's object was to organize a Democratic party in Kansas and be its leader. He wanted to settle in the biggest place in the territory.... [A] couple of days after I arrived in Lawrence, Colonel Lane came there with his family. I introduced him to the boys and we vied with one another in doing what we could for him in running out lines and building a cabin. The willingness of the free state people to help him, and the unwillingness of the pro-slavery party to carry out the Douglas squatter sovereignty bill in the territory, the driving away of true settlers from the polls and the frequent raids of the



JOHN ARMSTRONG,  
Who Conducted the Underground Rail-  
way Station in Topeka.

border ruffians, was what, I think, made such men as James H. Lane and hundreds of others as radical as any of us.”

*Armstrong’s cabin near 5th and Quincy was assigned number “429” in the City address system begun in 1887. Here he was the first Topekan to shelter people escaping slavery. From the January 23, 1910, State Journal:*

“I first started the underground [railroad] in this part of the country and piloted the first escaping slaves from this city [Topeka] to Silver Bend, Iowa.... We used to ford the Kaw river about where the [Kansas Ave.] bridge now stands always traveling by night and lying under cover during the day. Holton was [initially] the first station north and from there we went to Nebraska City and crossed the Missouri river at that point. After reaching Silver Bend...we turned the slaves over to the Quakers and from that point it was an easy matter to place them on Canadian soil.

“I have seen many stirring times near where the post office now stands [at 5th and Kansas, behind Armstrong’s house and facing Constitution Hall] when slave owners from the South came here looking for runaway slaves. They would sneak up to the windows of the old Topeka hotel [next north of the post office.] I have kept as many as a dozen slaves in the cellar under my old stone house for a week at a time until it was safe to venture forth. We never had any slaves taken from us but once and that was one time while crossing the Missouri river at Nebraska City....

“I suppose I have kept three hundred slaves in the house at 429 Quincy street, all told and every one of them was taken North and eventually reached Canada. I sometimes rode a pony on my trips but unless I had some women in the party I usually walked and slept on the ground. It required three weeks to make the trip from Topeka to Silver Bend...and I have encountered all kinds of weather.”

*The Topeka Mail & Breeze reported some of Armstrong’s UGRR expenditures:*

“In February, 1857, I established the first underground railroad from Kansas.... It cost me \$75 to hire a closed carriage and span of mules to help some colored women to get away. [Free State Gov. Charles] Robinson gave me \$10 and Major [James] Abbot and Colo-

nel [John] Ritchie \$5 each. I left Topeka and was gone three weeks looking up places where it would safe to send runaways....”

*Armstrong suffered tremendously in the loss of his true love, Eunice Scales. This story is recorded by **The Topeka Blue Book**:*

“William Scales was a sturdy citizen of Farmington, Maine. He set out for Kansas in 1854, and arrived at Parkville, Mo., late in the fall. He remained there through the winter of 1854-55. Early in 1855 he came to Topeka with his family—wife, two sons and a beautiful and accomplished daughter, named Eunice. He built a small house on the alley just east of the present post office.... Armstrong lived at the old Topeka house [a hotel] which stood [next to] the post office building. Early in 1857, one Lovejoy, a Methodist preacher from Illinois...went to Manhattan to lecture or preach. He drove from Kansas City in a buggy, and on his way stopped at the Topeka house. Armstrong went to the house of Scales to get milk for use at the hotel, a dairy having been established by Scales. Armstrong said to Miss Scales that he would borrow the buggy of Lovejoy if she would go riding with him. She told him that she had sent her father to borrow the buggy soon after the arrival of the minister and that it was at her disposal. “But, have you a driver?” asked Armstrong, somewhat taken back by his own lack of enterprise. “If not, perhaps I can serve you in that capacity.” They went driving in the minister’s buggy and were soon after engaged to be married. She had suffered from an attack of malarial fever and was just recovering at this time. A month later a man living in a house opposite the Scales home had smallpox, which, in some way, communicated to the Scales family. Miss Scales died from the disease in June, 1857. Her two brothers had died in 1855. William Scales died soon after the death of his daughter. Armstrong furnished Mrs. Scales a home as long as she lived. And he never married. He once said...: “I never saw a woman I thought could take the place of Eunice Scales in my life.” He erected a monument at her grave in the Topeka cemetery.”

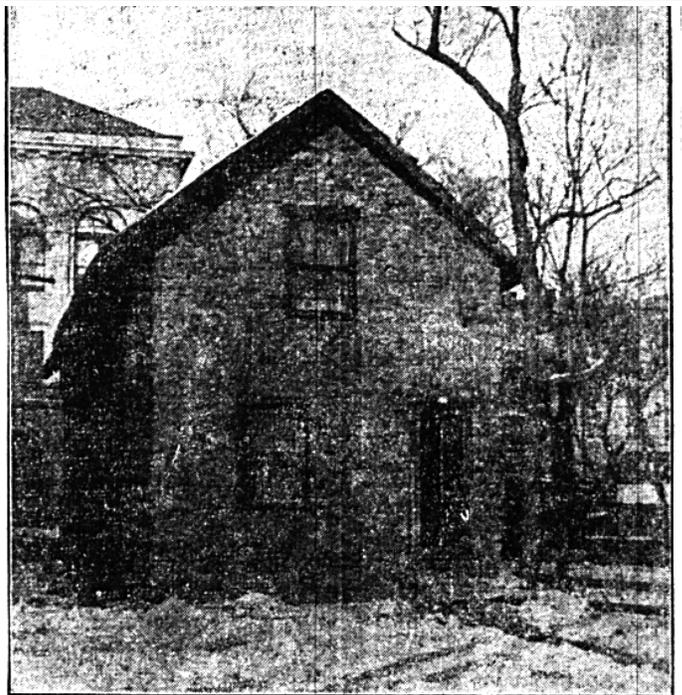
*Armstrong was noted for participating in some frontier-style justice. Isaac “Ike” Edwards was a notorious border ruffian living too near to Topeka for his ways. In 1861, Edwards attacked and murdered a Native Ameri-*

## John Armstrong, cont.

can in order to steal his horse. The 1896 *Mail & Breeze* reported:

“Mr. Armstrong was one of those present at the first hanging in Topeka. It was a lynching, with Ike Edwards, a border ruffian who lived near Tecumseh, as lynchee.... Edwards rode back into town...and was captured and placed in the jail. That night Mr. Armstrong, Dan Horne, Lem Horne and J.G. Bunker went to the jail, put a sack over the jailer’s head, bound Edwards hand and foot and suspended him by the neck from the bars on the outside of the jail window. The townspeople found Edwards’ lifeless form swinging in the breeze the next morning. The dead man had a bad reputation and there was such a feeling of relief over his demise that no trouble resulted for members of the necktie party.”

*This heroic Kansas farmer and later a Topeka street commissioner, died in St. Francis Hospital in 1911 and was buried at Rochester Cemetery. His house, which was the Scales’ cabin, is long gone. In 2010, this site was listed by the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program. It was also reported that John Brown held a rally at the cabin. Today the columned east façade of the 1933 Old Federal Building marks this location, where on the second floor, the Linda Brown school desegregation trials began.*



—Photo by Kielman.  
THE HOUSE AT 429 QUINCY STREET WHICH WAS AN “UNDERGROUND” STATION.

Author’s note: Other sources about the life of John Armstrong, besides *The Blue Book of Topeka*, include “A Few of the Pioneers,” *Topeka Mail & Breeze*, May 22, 1896, p. 3. “The Topeka Station on the ‘Underground Railway’ in Border Days,” *Topeka State Journal*, January 23, 1910. “Last of Founders of Topeka Dead,” *Topeka Daily Capital*, December 20, 1911, p. 1. “Pioneer is Dead,” *Topeka State Journal*, December 20, 1911. “Old Stone House on Quincy Street...,” *Topeka Daily Capital*, August 11, 1913, p. 5A



**The Landmark Preservation Committee** is exploring the heritage significance of the **Willard bridge crossing of the Kansas River** to produce community programs in both Willard and Rossville and expand awareness of the historical significance of the area in pre-territorial Kansas. The goal is to create public support for area heritage commemoration if and when the county commissions of Shawnee and Wabaunsee Counties replace the bridge. Such might entail designing the replacement bridge with public access to the river, displaying interpretative plaques addressing the heritage associated with Uniontown and erecting such national trail markings as appropriate. Forging the river near Willard was an important milestone along the California/Oregon Trails.

We will share stories associated with the Willard Kaw River bridge location in an upcoming *Historical Highlights*, as written by **Michael Stubbs**.

### “Enduring Struggle for Freedom”

Held on Sundays in November, 2012. We partnered with **Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area**:

- Nov. 4: **Dr. Walt Menninger**, president of the Menninger Foundation, spoke about the pioneering role of the Menninger family and associates in fostering greater compassion and support for the mentally ill, freeing them from isolation and disrepute.
- Nov. 11: **Thom Rosenblum**, National Park Service historian at the Brown v. Board NHS, made a presentation on Kansas and Topeka area Free Thinkers, posing the question of whether they were visionaries or nut cases
- Nov. 25: **Dr. Bill Wagnon**, emeritus Professor of History at Washburn, analyzed a local issue prompted by J. B. Billard and his son, Phillip, over daily compulsory Bible reading to open Topeka school days.

### “Shared Stories of the Civil War”

In keeping with the sesquicentennial commemoration of the Civil War, SCHS offered this fall series:

- Sept. 30: **Rhetoric of the Civil War Press** was directed by Ken Kerle and narrated by Ron Harbaugh.
- Oct. 7: **Wyandotte Constitutional Convention, 1859** was directed by Mary Feighny and narrated by Ron Harbaugh.
- Oct. 14: **The Cherokee Nation in the Civil War** was directed by Margaret Wood and narrated by Ron Harbaugh.
- Oct. 28: **Skirmish at Island Mound (Oct. 27, 1862)** was directed by David Tangeman and narrated by Ron Harbaugh.

A similar series of readings was produced in Spring, 2012 and future readings are planned.

### “Historic Preservation Series”

This series featured historic home preservation projects. Our co-sponsor was **Washburn University History Department**. The events were held on Sunday afternoons:

- Sept. 16: **Elizabeth Taylor** spoke about preserving her properties, the Woodward Inns Bed and Breakfasts.
- Oct. 21: **Barb Quaney** spoke about JQ Properties in Old Town area, near Topeka High School
- Nov. 18: **Nova Cottrell** discussed the Charles Curtis House Museum on Topeka Boulevard.



### Christmas Decorating & History Promotion

**Jim Ogle**, WIBW TV’s general manager, purchased the tree and wreath donated by the Shawnee County Historical Society at the Sheltered Living Festival of Trees in December, 2012. Both were displayed in the WIBW’s lobby.



**President Deb Bisel** appeared December 10, 2012, on Ralph Hipp’s 4 O’clock News show to promote membership in not only the SCHS, but other entities such as the **Great Overland Station**, **Combat Air Museum**, and the **Lecompton Historical Society**. Deb encouraged people to do their shopping at their gift shops associated with these organizations. While at the station, she took a moment to pose.



The tree and wreath featured images of historic buildings as well as people such as **John Ritchie** and **Cyrus K. Holliday**. — Photos by **Gary Bisel**

## 2012 Annual Meeting:

The **2012 Annual Meeting** was held on Sun., Dec. 2, 2012, from 2-4 p.m. at Cox Communications Heritage Education Center. Business included:

- Business meeting
- Election of officers/trustees for 2013
- Student presenter **Avery Munns** discussed her video documentary done for regional History Day at Washburn University, held February, 2012: "Clarina Nichols: Frontier Freedom Fighter"

Post-meeting entertainment included snacks, door prizes and a Holiday Bazaar.



Left: **Avery Munns** presents video on Clarina Nichols.



Above: Ex-SCHS President and outgoing board member **Carlton Scroggins** is honored for his service by President **Debra Goodrich Bisel**.



## Student Historian News:

by **Robin Schrimplin**, Education Consultant

The Shawnee County Historical Society is offering a special membership for students. For only \$10 your student will have access to educational programs and 8 tours of Shawnee Co. historical sites:

- March: **The Ritchie House**
- April: **Great Overland Station**
- May: **Combat Air Museum**
- June: **Constitution Hall**
- July: **Brown v. Board**
- August: **National Guard Museum**
- September: **Ward-Meade Park**
- October: **Topeka Cemetery**

Students may join the Shawnee County Historical Society by filling out the form on the back of this flier and mailing with \$10 to:  
 Shawnee County Historical Society  
 Student Historian  
 PO Box 2201 Topeka, Kansas 66601

**Search "SCHS Student Historians" on Facebook and follow us for up-to-date news, fun facts and tour schedules.**

Each tour will take place on the 3rd Saturday of the month at 1:00 p.m.

Student Historians will meet at the historical site for the tour, parents and guardians will be responsible for transportation. Children 12 and younger must be accompanied by an adult.



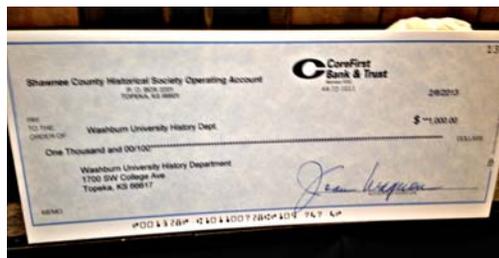
## Other SCHS Support & Events

### Student History Day: 2/23/2013, Washburn University

I just wanted to thank both SCHS President Deb Go-drich Bisel and Trustee Dr. Bill Wagon for their participation, and also for the SCHS thier continued support with a monetary donation to our District 3 History Day Competition here at Washburn. I have pulled off events before and after floods and all other kinds of bad weather but it was truly a MIRACLE that we had this window of decent weather to make this happen today [Saturday, February 23, 2013].

Every competing student received a copy of the Student Historian information and a SCHS membership application, along with their certificates and judging sheets. The information was also available to teachers, parents and other visitors at the registration table. That means today alone over 200 students and teachers (many who love history) have learned about this opportunity. I will also be sharing this information with my former history after school classes at Stout Elementary, and it would be awesome if Deb could do some promotional work with the local media about this. I think there is interest in this!

Thanks again for making this day happen for students here in this region of Kansas! (The other district competi-



tion that was scheduled for today was not so lucky—had to be rescheduled—so I am claiming this miracle and appreciating it accordingly!)

— My Best, **Robin Shrimplin**,  
Washburn University History department

### After Hours:

**Downtown Topeka Inc.’s After Hours** event was held at Cox Heritage Communication Center on January 10, 2013, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.



— Photos by **Edie Smith**  
Director, Marketing & Membership  
Downtown Topeka, Inc.



### Capital Area Explorers:

The Capital Area Explorers met at the Ritchie House on January 12, 2013, with 25 to 30 members attending. Deb Bisel spoke on the Ritchies, the Civil War in Kansas, and the rehabilitation of the Ritchie Houses. Pictured is Roy Marks (standing, right) who set up the meeting addressing his fellow Explorers. The Capital Area Explorers is a chapter of the Kansas Explorers Club whose mission is “to inspire, educate, and encourage the exploration and appreciation of Kansas...and have fun doing it!” The SCHS had a great time hosting this group!





# MEMBERSHIP FORM

**Our membership year is Jan. 1 to Dec. 31 annually.**

Make check to "Shawnee County Historical Society" and mail form w/ your check to: Shawnee County Historical Society, P.O., Box 2201, Topeka, KS 66601-2201  
PLEASE PRINT or TYPE info requested.

Choose type:  Student / \$10  Regular / \$35  Regular / \$35  Patron / \$50  Renovator / \$100

## PERSONAL MEMBERSHIP

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

## GIFT MEMBERSHIP

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Tax Deductible 501 (c)(3) DONATION Indicate amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to join this/these SCHS committee(s):  Nominations  Membership  Publications  
 Annual Meeting/Socials  Public Relations  Historic Preservation  Education/Communications

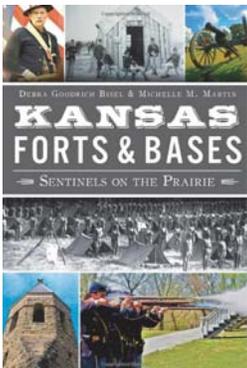
SCHS has gone High Tech AND is saving members money by teaming with PayPal on-line to accept memberships and donations. We also hope to offer sales of our inventory of *Bulletins* with on-line payment via PayPal. Links now appear on-line <http://www.shawneecountyhistory.org> to allow payment transactions via PayPal by secure credit or debit card transaction.

SCHS dues year runs from January 1 to December 31, each year.  
**Early in this year is the best time to join or renew for 2013!**



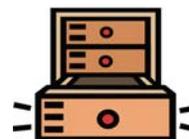
## Of Note:

**SCHS President Debra Goodrich Bisel** teamed with **Michelle M. Martin** in writing *Kansas Forts & Bases: Sentinels on the Prairie* for The History Press. The relationship between Kansas and the science of war is ingrained, consistent and evident, yet it seems antithetical to the quiet, conservative farmer who is the quintessential image of the state. It is not. The same values created both, and both created Kansas. Deb launched her book at the **Civil War Roundtable of Eastern Kansas** meeting on February 28, 2013. [These meetings are now held monthly at the SCHS Cox Communications Heritage Education Center.] The book is 144pp, retails for \$19.99, and is available to order online at Amazon, and both in print and as an ebook for the Nook from Barnes & Noble.



## Shawnee Co. Attic Sale

Our 2nd annual **Antiques Road Show Meets Estate Sale** will be in **Fall, 2013**. Keep this in mind as you do your post-New Year's "out with the old" cleaning! Mike Foxx is providing us warehouse space this year, and we can begin collecting soon. Phone SCHS @ 785-234-6097 to arrange for your donations. Please leave us a message, if necessary.



Mark Your Calendar!

# Forging Freedom's Frontier

Saturday, April 6, 2012

@ the Historic Ritchie Houses; 1116 - 1118 SE Madison

Partnering with the National Park Service, the event will feature an heritage walk between the Ritchie House to the Brown v. Board museum, encountering at several stages historical characters reenacting their contribution to the enduring struggle for freedom between the 1850s and the 1950s. *Details are forthcoming.*

# Historical Highlights

March 2013

## 100 Years Ago in Topeka:

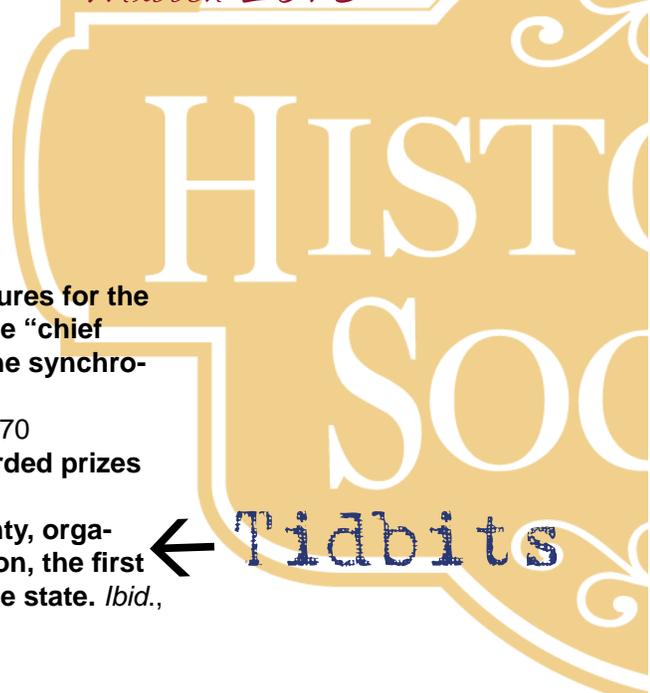
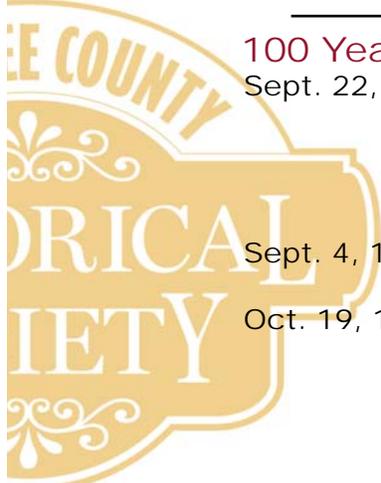
Sept. 22, 1913. **Topekans saw Edison talking pictures for the first time at the Grand Theater. The "chief astonishment of the picture is...the synchronization of sight and sound."**

*Annals of Kansas 1886-1925, v.2, p.70*

Sept. 4, 1913. **Topeka school children were awarded prizes for swatting flies. *Ibid.*, p.69**

Oct. 19, 1913. **Rochester School, Shawnee County, organized a parent-teachers association, the first rural group of its kind known in the state. *Ibid.*, v.2, p.72**

Tidbits



P.O. Box 2201, TOPEKA KS 66601-2201

Lighting Freedom's Pathway;  
Building Heritage Culture